

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 241 839

CG 017 316

AUTHOR Truckenmiller, James L.
TITLE Are Delinquents Different? Predictive Patterns for Low, Mid and High Delinquency Levels in a General Youth Sample via the HEW Youth Development Model's Impact Scales.
SPONS AGENCY Pennsylvania State Dept. of Public Welfare, Harrisburg.
PUB DATE Aug 82
NOTE 20p.; Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association (90th, Wasington, DC, August 23-27, 1982). For related documents, see ED 225 067, ED 229 674, ED 232 098, ED 233 261, ED 237 859, ED 239 188, and CG 017 317.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adolescents; *Delinquency; Delinquency Causes; Individual Differences; Labeling (of Persons); Models; Peer Influence; *Predictive Validity; *Predictor Variables; Secondary Education
IDENTIFIERS *Impact Scales

ABSTRACT

The Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) Office of Youth Development's National Strategy for Youth Development model was promoted as a community-based planning and procedural tool for enhancing positive youth development and reducing delinquency. To test the applicability of the model as a function of delinquency level, the program's Impact Scales were administered to 1,561 males and females, aged 10-19, who comprised a roughly 6 percent systematic school system sample. The sample was divided into three groups representing low, medium, and high self-reported delinquency (SRD). Stepwise multiple regression analyses were run separately for the full sample and within each subsample. Results showed prediction of the SRD variation was poorest within the high SRD subsample. Normative Peer Pressure appeared as a major predictor in the full sample and the mid and high SRD samples. Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Teachers was a major predictor in all data sets. Normlessness appeared as a major predictor for the full sample, and the low and mid SRD subsamples. Model confirmation was generally best when considering the general youth sample as was intended in the model's development. Other variables need to be investigated for more refined delinquency prediction within samples of highly delinquent youth. (JAC)

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Are delinquents different?

Predictive patterns for low, mid and high delinquency levels in a general youth sample via the HEW youth development model's Impact Scales.

James L. Truckenmiller

Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare

Loysville Youth Development Center

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Abstract

The predictive power of the HEW National Strategy for Youth Development (NSYD) Model's community program Impact Scales was tested within low, mid, and high self-reported delinquency (SRD) groups. The subjects were composed of 1,561 youths ages 10 - 19 who comprised a roughly 6% systematic school system sample. Stepwise multiple regression analyses were run separately for the full sample, and within the low, mid, and high SRD subsamples. Prediction of the SRD variation was poorest within the high SRD subsample. Model confirmation is generally best when considering a general youth sample as was intended in the model's development. Other variables need to be investigated for more refined delinquency prediction within samples of highly delinquent youth.

This article is part of a series of research reports on predicting juvenile delinquency via the HEW National Strategy for Youth Development model's Community Program Impact Scales. Previous reports have dealt with predicting both general self-reported delinquency level (Truckenmiller, 1982, 1983b, Note 1) and specific aspects of delinquency such as: wanton assaultiveness; vandalism; drug abuse; assaultive robbery; and gang fight participation (Truckenmiller, 1983c, 1983d, 1983e, 1983f). The current report focuses on differential prediction of general delinquency as a function of delinquency level by comparing prediction patterns obtained separately for low, mid, and high delinquency subsamples. The main question addressed is the applicability of the HEW Youth Development's social/psychological model as a function of delinquency level. A brief description of the HEW model will follow for readers not familiar with it.

The HEW Office of Youth Development's (OYD) National Strategy for Youth Development Model (Elliott et. al., Note 2) which serves as the theoretical context for this study was promoted as a community-based planning and procedural tool with the overall aim of enhancing positive youth development and simultaneously reducing delinquency. This strategy involves a process of youth needs assessment, the development of needs targeted programs, and program impact evaluation. It contains a social-psychological model of youth development and requisite measures of the model's theoretical components. Both theory and measurement were incorporated into its proposed community program process.

The HEW behavioral model is one wherein mutually reinforcing components press toward and interact with positive youth development on the one hand, or delinquency on the other. In a positive direction, a sense of general societal belonging, youth perceived positive peer group pressure, youth perceived positive labeling by significant others, and youth perceived access to desirable

social roles, are all synergistically reinforcing with positive behavior. In the negative direction, synergistic interactions press towards delinquent behavior. The HEW model is depicted in Figure 1.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Of the many assessment tools employed (a problems and needs section; a knowledge of agencies questionnaire; a demographic information section; and a series of Impact Scales), it is the Impact Scales which most directly reflect the model's components in psychometric form.

Twelve Impact Scales measure these major components. The alienation component is tapped by Impact Scales Normlessness vs. Conformity, Powerlessness vs. Control, and Societal Estrangement vs. Societal Integration. Youth perceived negative labeling by others is reflected by Impact Scales: Youth Perceived Negative/Positive Labeling by Parents; by Teachers; and by Peers. Another Impact Scale, Parental Rejection might logically be grouped here. Impact Scales tapping youth perceived access to desirable social roles include: Youth Perceived Access/Lack of Access to Educational Roles; and Youth Perceived Access/Lack of Access to Occupational Roles. The three remaining Impact Scales are: Normative Peer Group Pressure towards delinquency, Self-Esteem, and Self-Reported Delinquency (SRD). Table 1 lists these scales.

Insert Table 1 about here

Acceptable reliabilities (Brennan & Huizinga, Note 3), substantial predictive validity of Impact Scales with respect to Self-Reported Delinquency (SRD) on the order of $R^2 .70$ (Brennan & Huizinga, Note 3; and Truckenmiller,

1982), as well as consistent correlational structural validity (Brennan & Huizinga, Note 3; and Truckenmiller, 1978, 1983a, Note 4, Note 5) have been found for the Impact Scales. Impact Scales may also be highly predictive of variation for individual SRD items (Truckenmiller, 1983c, 1983d, 1983e, 1983f). It is the Impact Scales which serve as the vehicle for testing the HEW model at three levels of self-reported delinquency.

Method

Subjects

The subjects were 1,561 males and females, ages 10 - 19 years old, predominantly Caucasian, who comprised a roughly 6% systematic random sample of youth drawn from schools in the Allentown, PA area. This area was one of several in a multi-county demonstration project.⁴

Procedures

Materials. Materials consisted of the HEW Community Program Impact Scales administered as part of the Youth Needs Survey Questionnaire package (Elliott, et. al., Note 2) given in the Pennsylvania Youth Services Systems demonstration project (Lombardo, 1977; Truckenmiller, Skok, and Lennon, 1978). Proctors were on hand to help with any difficulties. Confidentiality, a preeminent concern, was maintained by use of respondent identification numbers rather than names.

Data Analysis. The sample was divided into three subsamples: the low SRD subsample comprised of youth whose SRD scores were at or below $\frac{1}{2}$ SRD standard deviation from the SRD mean; a mid level SRD subsample whose SRD scores fell between $-\frac{1}{2}$ and $+\frac{1}{2}$ SRD standard deviations from the SRD mean; and a high SRD subsample containing youth whose SRD scores were above $\frac{1}{2}$ SRD standard deviation units above the SRD mean. The low, mid, and high SRD subsamples contained 547, 671, and 343 youth respectively. Stepwise multiple regression analysis of Impact Scales on SRD was conducted for the full sample and for each subsample using a

MDP statistical package (Dixon, 1981). Final R_s obtained were corrected for restricted SRD range in the low, mid, and high SRD subsample results. (Guilford, 1965).

Results

Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 show summaries of variables successively extracted via stepwise multiple regression along with corresponding R , R^2 , increase in R^2 , and F -to-enter at each step for the full sample, low SRD subsample, mid SRD subsample, and high SRD subsample respectively.

Insert Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 about here

Predictive patterns varied as a function of the sample analyzed. For the full sample (Table 2), successively extracted SRD predictors were: Normative Peer Group Pressure, Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Teachers, Normlessness, Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Parents, Self-esteem, Youth Perceived Parental Rejection, and Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Peers. The final R with SRD was .666. Almost 95% of the predictive variance was accounted for by the first 4 variables and the increase in R^2 accrued by addition of the fourth variable (LabPar) was only .012.

For the low SRD subsample (Table 3), Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Teachers and Normlessness were the only successively extracted variables predictive of SRD. The final R , uncorrected for restricted SRD range, was .225, accounting for 5% of SRD variance ($R^2 = .05$). However, the final R corrected for restricted SRD subsample range was .871, hypothetically accounting for 76% of SRD variance had SRD scores in the subsample been made equivalent in psychometric distribution to the full range of SRD scores.

For the mid level SRD subsample (Table 4), successively extracted predictive variables were: Normative Peer Pressure, Normlessness, Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Teachers, Self-esteem, and Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Parents. 87% of the predictive variance was accounted for by the first three variables and 95% of the predictive variance was accounted by the first four variables extracted. The final $\underline{R}$, uncorrected for restricted SRD range, was .388 accounting for 15% of the SRD subsample variance. The final $\underline{R}$ corrected for restricted subsample SRD range was .809 hypothetically accounting for 65% of SRD variance (corrected $\underline{R}^2 = .654$).

For the high SRD subsample (Table 5), successively extracted variables were: Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Teachers, Youth Perceived Parental Rejection, Normative Peer Group Pressure, and Self-esteem. The final $\underline{R}$, uncorrected for restricted subsample SRD range, was .446 accounting for about 20% of SRD variance (uncorrected final $\underline{R}^2 = .198$). The final $\underline{R}$ corrected for restricted subsample SRD range was .455 hypothetically accounting for roughly 21% of SRD variance (corrected $\underline{R}^2 = .207$).

Discussion

If one considers only the first three variables extracted for each sample without respect to order (with two variables extracted altogether in the low SRD subsample), these first few variables accounting as they do for the bulk of SRD predictive variance, there are more similarities than differences amongst the data sets. Normative Peer Pressure appears as a major predictor in the full sample, the mid SRD sample, and in the high SRD sample. Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Teachers appears as a major predictor in all of the data sets; and Normlessness appears as a major predictor for the full sample, the low SRD subsample, and the mid SRD subsample.

In comparing and contrasting regression patterns, the mid SRD prediction pattern was most similar to that of the full sample in considering both the variables extracted and the order of extraction, with *Nrmppr*, *LabTch* and *Nrmlss* obtained for the full sample; and *Nrmppr*, *Nrmlss*, and *LabTch* obtained for the mid SRD subsample. Both the low and high SRD subsamples had two out of three major predictors in common with the full sample, but only one in common with each other. In neither case was the extraction order of any of the variables identical to that found in the full sample.

If one accepts R corrections for restricted range, inflated as they seem to be, the accuracy of SRD prediction from Impact Scales appears substantially better for the full sample, low SRD subsample, and mid SRD subsample than for the high SRD subsample. In the main, with respect to the low, mid and high level SRD subsamples, it seems that the HEW model predicts SRD variation within the mid SRD level best, and within the high SRD level most poorly. It appears that the HEW model loses in predictive and explanatory power when considering finer gradients of delinquency in those youth who are already highly delinquent, and that the model works best when considering a general youth sample and mid SRD sample where not only is SRD predictive power relatively high, but also, a larger majority of theoretically SRD predictive variables are empirically so. These results also suggest that, given youth are highly delinquent, variables other than those included in the HEW model must be looked to for more finely discriminative and explanatory power. It should be mentioned that at no delinquency level do Youth Perceived Access to Educational and Occupational Role variables aid in SRD predictions. In terms of the HEW model Impact Scale SRD regression patterns, delinquents are somewhat different from non delinquents. For further delineation, factors such as organicity (Klesges & Fisher, 1981)

learning disabilities (McKay & Brumback, 1980; Mauser, 1974; Miller et. al., 1976; Murray et. al., 1976), family constellation (Kagarise & Truckenmiller, Note 6) and child abuse (Reich & Gutierres, 1979) should be included in comprehensive biological, psychological, social and situational multivariate studies involving cooperation between health (physical and psychological), education, welfare, and criminal justice agencies and which aim at predicting specific types of delinquent acts (Truckenmiller, 1983c, 1983d, 1983e, 1983f) as well as general delinquency level.

Footnotes

1. This research was supported by a grant from the Crime Prevention Program for juveniles from the Office of Children, Youth and Families, PA Department of Public Welfare. Joseph A. Skok, PA Department of Education, was multi-county Pennsylvania Project Director. William P. Lennon was director of the county project which provided the data for this report. James L. Truckenmiller was senior research and evaluation associate for the Pennsylvania Project and wishes to express his indebtedness to the many people too numerous to list.

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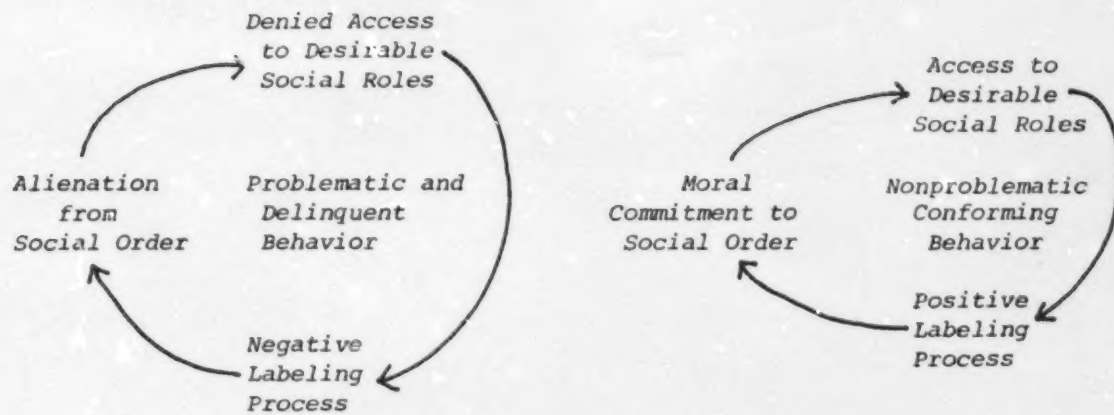


Figure 1 - The synergistic press of variables towards and away from delinquency in the HEW Youth Development Model.

Table 1

List of HEW Community Program Impact Scales Entered into the Stepwise Multiple
Regression Analyses

-
1. Normlessness.
 2. Societal Estrangement.
 3. Control vs. Powerlessness.
 4. Youth Perceived Lack of Access to Educational Roles.
 5. Youth Perceived Lack of Access to Occupational Roles.
 6. Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Parents.
 7. Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Teachers.
 8. Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Peers.
 9. Self-esteem.
 10. Normative Peer Group Pressure Towards Delinquency.
 11. Parental Rejection.
 12. Self-Reported Delinquency (SRD)
-

Table 2

Summary of variables successively extracted via stepwise multiple regression of Impact Scales on SRD and the corresponding multiple R , R^2 , increase in R^2 , and F -to-enter at each step for the full sample.

Step Number	Variable		Multiple		Increase	F-to-
	Entered	Removed	R	R^2	in R^2	Enter
1.	Nrmppr		.547	.299	.299	665.37
2.	LabTch		.607	.369	.070	171.71
3.	Nrmlss		.640	.410	.041	108.03
4.	LabPar		.649	.421	.012	31.20
5.	SlfEst		.657	.431	.010	27.71
6.	ParRej		.664	.441	.010	26.72
7.	LabPer		.666	.444	.003	7.49

Note: Nrmppr = Normative Peer Group Pressure; LabTch = Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Teachers; Nrmlss = Normlessness; LabTch = Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Teachers; LabPar = Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Parents; SlfEst = Self-Esteem; ParRej = Youth Perceived Parental Rejection; LabPer = Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Peers.

Table 3

Summary of variables successively extracted via stepwise multiple regression of Impact Scales on SRD and the corresponding multiple $\underline{R}$, $\underline{R}^2$, increase in $\underline{R}^2$, and $\underline{F}$ -to-enter at each step for the low SRD sample.

Step Number	Variable		Multiple		Increase	F-to-
	Entered	Removed	$\underline{R}$	$\underline{R}^2$	in $\underline{R}^2$	Enter
1.	LabTch		.179	.032	.032	17.974
2.	Normlss		.225	.050	.018	10.599

Final $\underline{R}$ corrected for restricted range = .871; $\underline{R}^2 = .757$

Note: Labtch = Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Teachers; Normlss = Normlessness.

Table 4

Summary of variables successively extracted via stepwise multiple regression of Impact Scales on SRD and the corresponding multiple R , R^2 , increase in R^2 , and F -to-enter at each step for the mid SRD sample.

Step Number	Variable		Multiple		Increase	F-to-
	Entered	Removed	R	R^2	in R^2	Enter
1.	Nrmppr		.295	.087	.087	63.80
2.	Normlss		.342	.117	.030	22.49
3.	LabTch		.363	.132	.015	11.58
4.	SlfEst		.379	.144	.012	9.378
5.	LabPar		.388	.151	.007	5.26

Final R corrected for restricted range = .809; R^2 = .654

Note: Nrmppr = Normative Peer Group Pressure; Normlss = Normlessness; LabTch = Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Teachers; SlfEst = Self-Esteem; LabPar = Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Parents.

Table 5

Summary of variables successively extracted via stepwise multiple regression of Impact Scales on SRD and the corresponding Multiple R , R^2 , increase in R^2 , and F -to-enter at each step for the high SRD sample.

Step Number	Variable		Multiple		Increase in R^2	F -to- Enter
	Entered	Removed	R	R^2		
1.	LabTch		.338	.114	.114	44.09
2.	ParRej		.383	.147	.032	12.89
3.	Nrmppr		.420	.176	.030	12.15
4.	Slfest		.446	.198	.022	9.3196

R corrected for restricted SRD range = .455; R^2 = .207

Note: LabTch = Youth Perceived Negative Labeling by Teachers; ParRej = Youth Perceived Parental Rejection; Nrmppr = Youth Perceived Normative Peer Pressure; Slfest = Self-esteem.